

city of terre haute

PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
208 City Hall  
17 Harding Avenue  
Terre Haute, Indiana 47807



CHAUNCEY ROSE MEMORIAL PLAZA  
1935

FAIRBANKS PARK RENOVATION DEDICATION

JUNE 10, 1984



USA  
20c



# Park Perspective

T.H. Gaze Jr.  
1-2-85

by Patrick Ralston,  
Community Affairs File

City Parks Superintendent

Parks + Recreation

## Collett Park (N/C)

The subject of this week's article is Collett Park which is located at 7th and Maple Avenue on the city's northeast side. Collett Park is Terre Haute's oldest City Park and has a total of 21 acres of which large mature trees make up a large portion.

Collett Park was established in 1892 on land donated by Josephus Collett who was born in Vermillion County, Indiana in 1831. Collett attended Wabash College before he started his illustrious career farming, stock trading, pork packing and merchandising. He became interested in railroads as a better means of transportation between Evansville and Chicago. Collett was involved in the building of eight different railroad lines through the United States.

Josephus Collett was a close friend of Chauncey Rose and gave considerable financial assistance to the Rose Orphans Home, Rose Dispensary and Rose Polytechnic Institute.

Collett and his brother John, founded and totally financed the Collett Home for Orphans on Collett Home Farm located on State Road 63 near Cayuga. When Collett died he left one of the countrys' largest geological and archaeological collections of over 14,000 rare specimens to Rose Poly (now Rose-Hulman Institute).

The Collett Park neighborhood has a very unique character all its own. Many of the large Victorian homes were built by the Rose Poly faculty in the early 1900s. The Collett Park area is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Terre Haute and remains much as it was in the early 1900's.

On December 10, 1981 Collett Park was placed on the National Register of Historic Places under the National Preservation Act of 1966. I would say the entire Collett Park neighborhood should be placed in the National Register. The character of this unique part of Terre Haute should be preserved through the ages.

Collett Park still has remnants of the old horse and buggy roads as well as part of the original fountain. The main attraction on the Park is the large Pavilion which was constructed in 1883. It has been totally renovated and still maintains its original form. It was designed by local architect J. Merrill Sherman. Other features of the park of more recent vintage are the tennis courts, playground area, 3 picnic shelters, restrooms, horseshoe courts, and open play areas.

Collett Park is considered to be one of the most beautiful and serene parks our city has to offer. On some days when the traffic is light, it almost seems as if one can travel back in time when life styles were at a much slower pace.

The Collett Park Pavilion can be rented out for meetings and special occasions. Call the Park Department Office for more information (232-2727).

REFERENCE  
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Community Affairs File

Vigo County Public Library

*Parks & Recreation*  
*(High Co.)*  
**Park donations**  
**total at least \$933**

JAN 2 1981  
The Park Department instituted a gift catalog last year and it resulted in at least \$933 worth of donations from local businesses by the end of 1980, according to figures from Pat Ralston, park superintendent.

According to reports, the following donations have been received: five concrete parking bumpers from Forsyth Brothers; \$239 for a park bench from Ampacet Corp.; \$105 for a grill in Collett Park from Quality Fence; \$189 for a picnic table from Kasameyer Glass; \$250 for any use from Gibson Coal; and \$150 from American Legion Post 340 for any use.

The catalog was instituted last year to let local clubs, businesses and individuals know what could be purchased for the department through donations.

Ralston has said the donations will help upgrade the parks at a time when supporting tax revenues expected to increase too much.



# Local board reimburses department for expenditures on park renovation

Community Affairs File

T JAN 29 1981

The Terre Haute Park and Recreation Board reimbursed the Department of Redevelopment Wednesday for more than \$120,474 for construction costs in the renovation of Spencer F. Ball Park.

According to reports, the Department of Redevelopment already has paid \$120,474 for the project and the board Wednesday acted to reimburse the department for those expenses.

Most of the money on the project is federal.

The renovation work is about 75 percent complete and it might be open to the public this spring, according to reports.

In other business, the board approved a plan where Park Superintendent Pat Ralston may enter into a reciprocal use agreement with the YWCA and the Girl Scouts Covered

Bridge Council.

The proposed agreement would allow each of the organizations to utilize park facilities in return for letting the park department use YWCA and Girl Scout facilities for some programs. The agreement still must be approved by boards of both the YWCA and the Girl Scouts.

The reciprocal agreement is to give the city extra points in its application to obtain funds for renovation of Fairbanks Park. An application for federal funding of such a project was recently denied, but city officials plan to reapply and it is hoped the reciprocal agreement would increase its chances of receiving the money.

Community Affairs File

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Park & Recreation  
(Vigo Co.)

# Vigo County Parks Get \$50,000 Grant

T MAR 19 1981

The State of Indiana has received notification of the approval of a \$50,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund matching grant to the Vigo County Park and Recreation Board. The announcement was made today by James M. Ridennour, Director of the Department of Natural Resources.

The grant will be used to develop hiking trails, two playgrounds, fishing area and sports and playfields and to renovate the dam at Northeast Vigo County Park. The trails, fishing and playing facilities include special adaptations for the handicapped.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is a federal 50-50 matching program which provides assistance to city and county park and recreation boards for the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation sites and facilities. Since the inception of the program in 1965, over \$28 million has been invested in such local projects. The program is administered by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

Vigo County Public Library

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Community Affairs File

## Collett Park: Terre Haute's Oldest Park

*Parks + Recreation (UC)*  
Collett Park is full of trees, open green space and winding park roads. It also has the distinction of being the city's oldest and largest neighborhood park. Within its 21.1 acres is located the city's oldest park structure, Collett Pavilion, recently added to the list of National Historic Buildings. This structure is noted for both its historical and architectural significance.

There are four lighted tennis courts, a large creative playground, restrooms, picnic shelters and 12 horseshoe courts. On July 16, 1983, Collett Park celebrated its 100th Anniversary as a City Park. A new shelter was dedicated to mark the occasion.

*T.H. Gazette  
12-26-84*

Community Affairs File

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Vigo County Public Library



# Five-Year Program Is Approved By Indiana Resources Department

*Parks & Recreation, Vigo Co*

T MAR 24 1981

Approval of plans for the renovation and repairing of city parks was received by the city park board from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, said Pat Ralston, superintendent of the Terre Haute City Park Department.

The city's 18 neighborhood parks and two golf courses are slated for improvements during the next five years, Ralston said, with Voorhees and Fairbanks parks first on the list.

Bids are being let this month for work to be done at Voorhees Park, which includes fixing the ball diamond, installing a parking lot and playground equipment and doing some landscaping, Ralston said. The actual work should begin the first of May.

Besides Voorhees, Fairbanks is the only other park scheduled for major work this summer, Ralston said. Bids will be let in June for the construction

of a boat ramp and an outdoor amphitheater to be built this summer at Fairbanks.

These renovations are part of a five-year park and recreation plan recently approved by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

The preparation and periodic updating of such plans is required for participation in the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, Ralston said.

This program allows the reimbursement of up to 50 percent of total costs of projects which meet local outdoor recreational needs.

Other funding for the renovations will be provided by Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Funds and the U.S. Department of Redevelopment, Ralston said.

The work at Voorhees and Fairbanks parks should be completed by fall, Ralston said, as should other minor "in house" repairs of other parks.

"We're doing something to every park in a systematic approach," Ralston said. "They're not in bad condition, we just need to continually improve them."

Ralston said he's not anticipating any acquisition of land for new facilities. "The main thrust is to repair what we've got."

The park board's goal is to make recreational activities pleasant, Ralston said, "and to bring back the parks the way they should be."

Parks + Recreation (Vigo Co.)

Community Affairs File

# Park crime clean-up sought

A crime prevention effort is in effect at Deming Park. And, along with crime clean-up, annual spring-cleaning of local parks is also under way.

A Terre Haute City Police officer is now living in a residence at Deming Park to provide round-the-clock security, according to Pat Ralston, parks and recreation superintendent.

Ralston said there were over 350 arrests in Deming Park last year, which were mostly in connection with alcohol and drug use and some traffic violations. "We cleaned it up pretty well," he commented.

Because Deming is the largest city park, he said, "We felt it would be in

the best interest of everyone if we had an officer living in the home." In addition to his regular police duties, officer Jerry Arney will be patrolling the park and making arrests.

Arney's only compensation for the additional workload is living in the park residence. Ralston clarified the officer will not receive double pay.

Although this is a first attempt at this kind of crime prevention locally, Ralston said he is confident it will be a success. He said the practice has been common procedure in state parks and "it works out very well."

Meanwhile, park crews of about 25 people have been working on general cleaning in the city parks and other

areas. T APR 10 1981

Ralston said every sidewalk in the city's parks have been edged and he hopes the city's effort will "get other people stimulated to take care of their lawns and sidewalks, instead of depending on the city to do everything."

Clean-up efforts have included cleaning and tree bark replenishing of planters in the downtown area and brush removal along the Wabash River in Fairbanks Park.

Bleacher and light repairs are underway at Memorial Park, according to Ralston. And, new playground equipment and a new fence also will be installed at the northside park.

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## Local Notes

T APR 15 1981

*Parks & Recreation (Vigo Co.)*

The state has received a check from the Federal Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service in the amount of \$60,237.08, which will be sent to the Terre Haute Park and Recreation Board. The announcement was made by James M. Ridenour, director of the Department of Natural Resources. The check represents partial reimbursement for construction of Spencer Field.

The project is receiving financial assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which provides 50 percent of the cost for acquisition of lands and waters and the development of public outdoor recreation sites and facilities.

This federal assistance program is administered by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. In addition to obligating money to state projects, the department makes funds available to city and county park and recreation boards. Since the inception of the program in 1965, over \$28 million has been invested in such local projects.

The Department of Natural Resources has implemented a long-range fishery management plan for Hawthorne Park Lake in Terre Haute.

The Vigo County Park and Recreation Department recently acquired the 15-acre impoundment from a private owner.

During March, the DNR began the first phase of the plan by ridding the lake basin and watershed of undesirable or "rough" fish species which might hinder the development of the game fish population as the lake matures.

Biologists from the DNR report that the eradication was accomplished by applying rotenone, a biodegradable fish toxicant to the watershed.

After the rotenone has dropped to non-toxic levels, the DNR will stock largemouth bass, redear, bluegill and channel catfish. All fish stocked will be fingerlings, which will require two to three years to grow large enough to provide good sport fishing.

# Damage To City Parks Near \$10,000 Mark

S AUG 26 1981

By GERALD P. GRIMES  
Star Staff Writer

Vandals have cost the city parks department almost \$10,000 so far this year, according to Patrick R. Ralston, city parks department superintendent.

While it was still under construction, vandals at Spencer Ballpark destroyed equipment and caused other damage totaling almost \$2,000.

At Rose Park, vandals recently destroyed part of a shelterhouse roof, costing near \$500 to repair.

The city's two municipal golf courses have been vandalized frequently, as well as Deming Park, Voorhees Park and other city park properties.

"The sad thing is that we could have used this money for just about anything to improve our parks," Ralston said.

Most of the vandalism is, not surprisingly, done by youths.

"Young kids whose parents let them run around at 11 or 12 at night," Ralston says. "The problem starts at home," he added.

Ironically, recent vandalism arrestees at the Spencer Park didn't live in that area, Ralston said.

Spencer park has been particularly hard hit by vandals. Some of the destruction cost was underwritten by the contractor refurbishing the park, Major and Sons of Clinton.

Ralston said the contractor legally had to bear responsibility for any losses while the park project was still under construction. He indicated that vandalism problems were extensive. In one case, basketball goals were destroyed within hours of being put up.

"I don't know why but they seem to be more interested in tearing up the new than the old," Ralston said.

The cost of the goals and other repair work necessary during the park's construction because of vandalism was close to \$800, Ralston said.

The city takes a risk that vandalism will cause problems anytime a new project is started.

"We've always got to take that chance. I'd say 99 percent of the people are no problem, and all you can do is hope that you can deal with that one percent."

New projects include renovation of Fairbanks Park and the Fairbanks Memorial, which has

crumbled partly due to age and acts of vandalism, Ralston says.

"I'm sure vandalism's had a lot to do with the memorial being in the kind of shape its in," Ralston said.

Collett Park's pavillion will be refurbished as part of a project this fall. The parks deptment's crew will be doing some of the rennovation work on the pavillion and the construction of fences around the horse shoe pitching area.

Part of the problem has been eliminated with the use of additional security lighting and increased patrols by city police officers.

"We've also tried to talk to people in the neighborhoods," Ralston said.

He indicated that public awariness of the problem, and cooperation from those who live near the parks will help reduce park vandalism.

"I've told people that they don't really have to give their names or get involved at all. Just call the police when they see or know something about vandalism in the parks. If we could get enough people doing just that we wouldn't have such a problem," Ralston said.

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T OCT 17 1981

Parks and Recreation (Vigo Co.)

# City park costs, fees to go up

Community Affairs File

Community Affairs File

Inflationary costs will cause city park system users to dig deeper in their pockets next year as a result of action taken by the Terre Haute Park and Recreation Department board Friday.

The board voted to hike fees for softball leagues, golf fees, and swimming pool fees in 1982, but Park Superintendent Pat Ralston said today that he and the board are both hoping another hike will not be needed for at least another two years.

"Costs have skyrocketed," Ralston explained. "Things like fertilizer and grounds equipment have prices that are just out of sight. All we're trying to do with the increases in user fees is to keep up with the rising costs of these items."

Ralston also said that the board took under advisement a suggestion that higher user fees be set for out-of-city residents. "The board wasn't in favor of such a plan, but did decide to take it under advisement for consideration at a later ate," he added.

Several board members indicated that they had received complaints from tennis court users that because of high use by the Terre Haute Tennis Club, courts are not always available for other users.

Ralston said that he plans to discuss the problem with the tennis club

officials.

New fee schedules approved for 1982 include:

- Softball League Team Prices — \$185, up \$10 including umpires, bases, balls, and lightbulbs. Sunday night women's league up \$25 to \$125.

- Golf fees — season tickets up \$15 to \$100 at Rea Park and \$215 at Hulman Links, junior season tickets up \$5 to \$50 at Rea and \$115 at Hulman, senior citizens ticket (40 percent discount), up \$15 to \$60 at Rea and \$130 at Hulman, joint season

tickets at both courses up \$20 to \$250, junior/senior citizen tickets at both courses up \$15 to \$150 and limited senior citizen tickets at both courses (Monday through Friday only) up \$15 to \$100.

- Green Fees — up \$1 to \$7 daily and \$9 weekends at Hulman and \$5 daily and \$6 weekends at Rea. Carts for 18 holes at Hulman up \$2 to \$14.64 for nine holes \$7.28 at Rea for 18 holes up \$1 to \$12.48 for nine holes \$6.24.

- Swimming Pool Rental — groups using pools on a regular basis are assessed a \$40 per week charge, up

\$10.

- Swimming pool rates — up 25 cents to \$1.25 for adults and \$1 for children. However, discount books for 10 swims are available at a cost of \$10 for adults and \$7.5 for children. The discount books are new and if used will reduce pool costs to the old price level. In addition, children under two years of age will be admitted to the pools free when accompanied by an adult, he said. Ralston also noted that if the discount books are successful, there is a possibility that next year family passes will be inaugurated.

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*Thrust Recreation (Vigo Co.)*

# Parks in Terre Haute

T NOV 23 1981

## note activity increase

T NOV 23 1981

Community Affairs File.

By DOUG HUNT  
Tribune Staff Writer

Terre Haute parks are enjoying an increase in recent activities, including the addition of a self-guided nature trail, construction of a combined fire station and park and renovation of Fairbanks Park.

Spending about \$200 for the lumber to mark locations of existing nature trails at Dobbs Park, Pat Ralston, parks superintendent, explained that the self-guiding nature trail will aid people in outdoors education.

Brochures for trail locations, to be marked with a numbered post on each wooden post, will be sent to the printers this week.

Park department employees and Indiana State University Department of Recreation volunteers set the wooden posts.

Brochures for the less than the half-mile trail, which may be one of two in state cities (the other is located in Indianapolis), will include seasonal information and locations and names of wildflowers along the trail.

The trail in the nature preserve

begins at the northwest location of the lake. An alteration will be made in one of the park's trails to be utilized by cross country skiers.

Meanwhile, at Oakley Park, a Dec. 8 tentative date is set for the dedication of a combined neighborhood park and fire station, considered to be the first in the United States, Ralston said.

The one-acre park and fire station is made possible through \$35,000 from the philanthropic Oakley family and \$50,000 from Department of Re-development funds.

Besides being the only park with a combined park and fire station, Oakley Park also will have custom-designed recreation equipment designed by the architects Sebree, Craig and McKnight, Indianapolis.

The project is "virtually finished" and the architectural design is "quite different, contemporary in essence," according to Ken Sebree, one of the architects.

The project began about a year ago with Major and Sons Construction Inc., near Terre Haute, being hired for the construction.

A spokesman at Major and Sons Construction Inc. said "the project is pretty near complete and looks real good." Also included will be two picnic tables.

Ralston hopes that the location of a park and fire station, located at Ninth and College streets, will curb vandalism.

And, plans are set for a May 15, 1982, celebration for phase one of the Fairbanks Park project.

Plans call for the memorial renovation, outdoor stage band shell construction, lighting work and some landscaping.

Cost of the project was about \$279,000, with funding primarily by the federal government.

The "War of 1812 Overture" will be presented by the Terre Haute Symphony, including a round of cannon fire following completion of phase one.

Phase two of the project, which will begin next July, includes construction of a 20-station fitness course, Vigo County's only boat dock and a fishing pier for the handicapped.

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Parks and Recreation [Vigo]  
Community Affairs File  
**City residents get 1st chance at shelters**

DEC 17 1981  
Under a new resolution, city residents will have first priority when reserving shelters at city parks for the coming summer.

The Terre Haute Park and Recreation Board passed a resolution this week which will allow only Terre Haute residents to make 1982 reservations between Jan. 1 and March 1 according to Pat Ralston, superintendent.

After March 1, reservations will be accepted from residents outside the city limits.

The purpose of the resolution, Ralston said, is to "try and help residents of Terre Haute get first crack at the shelters."

There are no fees for use of the shelters,

the city parks being supported by those who pay city taxes, he explained.

There is a huge demand for the shelters, according to Ralston. He expects 50 people to be in line waiting to reserve shelters the first Monday of the new year, Jan. 4.

Other cities have begun to take similar action which will give city residents first access to city facilities, he added.

In other action, the park board approved a letter to the state asking for repairs on a boat ramp at Fairbanks Park. Maintenance of the ramp is part of a 99-year lease with the state, according to Ralston.

Also, a grant application has been submitted for 1983. The application was second on the list for the 1982 funds, but the

program was put in limbo by the Reagan administration, Ralston said.

In other business, the park board voted to ask the Harrison Township Trustee to contribute \$35,000 for recreation programs in 1982.

Since the Vigo County School Corp. has dropped its recreational program, Ralston said, the park department would like to try and provide additional programs.

The \$35,000 would pay for new programs, including new equipment and new salaries.

The park board was provided the annual report of the department. The report shows the department income in 1981 increased 12 percent over 1980.



S. DEC 17 1981

# Park Board Changes Rules About Shelter Reservations

*Park and Recreation 1540 Co*

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Other cities have begun to take similar action which will give city residents first access to city facilities, he added.

In other action Tuesday, the park board approved a letter to the state demanding compliance with a lease for the boat ramp at Fairbanks Park. The state signed a 99-year lease requiring the state maintain the ramp and parking lot and provide landscaping, according to Ralston. The state has not complied with the lease and the ramp has fallen into disrepair.

The city learned of the lease when the state asked "to get out of it" Ralston said. The park board has decided to hold the state to the lease since the ramp was a part of the Fairbanks Park Grant Application which was turned down last year.

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Vigo County Public Library

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